The Inquirer

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ISSUE

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The New Opportunity

THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

THE large hall of Oxford Place Chapel was full to overflowing as the ministers and delegates assembled for the Annual Business Meeting on Thursday. There was a feeling of expectancy in the air, and a sense of optimism which has not been felt so strongly in recent years.

The meeting opened with devotions led by the Rev. John Rowland of Brighton (who was in past years a member of the Committee of Mill Hill Chapel in Leeds). Then, with the Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede in the Chair, the business of the day began. First, as is customary, a vote of thanks to the retiring President was passed with enthusiasm. The proposer was the Rev. John Hinkins of Leeds, who praised the assiduity with which Mr. Ede had journeyed far and wide throughout Britain during his period of office, and seconded by the Rev. Kenneth Twinn, who recalled that Mr. Ede had, in politics, been Secretary of State for Home Affairs, but in religion, had been our Ambassador abroad. In his reply Mr. Ede stressed the enthusiasm of those who had seen new buildings arise, and referred with pride to the fact that his year of office had seen the new Essex Hall, the new church at Plymouth, and the rebuilt Cross Street Chapel, Manchester.

He thereupon moved the appointment of the Rev. A. W. Vallance, B.A., as his successor. Mrs. Fraser, a member of Mr. Vallance's church at Altrincham, seconded this, and there followed the traditional ceremony, in which the chain of office, worn by Mr. Ede on so many occasions during the past year, was placed firmly on the shoulders of his successor.

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Mr. Vallance then delivered his Presidential Address (already reported in these columns) and followed by proposing from the Chair the appointment of Mr. A. L. Blake as Vice-President for 1959-60. This, too, was warmly applauded by the large audience.

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The Rev. John Kielty, Secretary to the General Assembly, submitted the Report of the Council and spoke on the state of the Assembly; this speech, too, has been separately reported here. And then there came what was perhaps the most exciting moment, when Mr. Ronald P. Jones, for twenty years past the Assembly's Honorary Treasurer, rose to his feet to comment on the accounts. The audience applauded Mr. Jones wholeheartedly, showing its delight that he had made such a fine recovery from his recent accident. His comments, shrewd and sensible, showed, too, that he was as much of a master of the financial situation as in days gone by.

The submission of the reports of the various Committees, which were next, are liable to be something of a formality; this year the proceedings were enlivened by a long and lively speech from Mrs. Crosskey of the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham, on the subject of ministerial stipends. Mrs. Crosskey was unable to stay for the afternoon discussion, and felt that the ideas of Birmingham friends could best be put forward at that point. Her suggestion was that the stipends of ministers should be related to time spent in ministerial office, as well as to positions of special responsibility, and to educational status, so that the earning of a higher degree might mean an increase in stipend. She felt, too, that pensions and stipends should be in some way related, as they are in local government service. Could not stipends be paid wholly from a central fund to which all the churches should contribute?

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With Report and Accounts approved, the Assembly turned to more personal matters. The most moving moment of the morning came when the Rev. H. Stewart Carter (seconded by Mr. H. B. Moore) moved that the thanks of the Assembly be given to the retiring Treasurer, Mr. Ronald P. Jones, and that he be elected an Honorary Member of the Assembly. Mr. Carter said that no words of his could adequately express the feeling of what was owed to Mr. Jones. The whole audience rose and applauded, and Mr. Jones, though he said that "such eulogies of one's services verge on obituary notices," agreed that it was a great honour that had been paid him, and expressed his great appreciation of it.

Mr. C. H. Pollard, City Treasurer of Hull, was elected in Mr. Jones's place; and then the Assembly turned to votes of thanks to those who were making these meetings so notable—to the Rev. W. Waddington for his Anniversary Sermon, to the Rev. M. Bonner for conducting the service, and to Mill Hill Chapel and its congregation. Afterwards there came greetings from overseas Churches (including the Brotherhood Church at Lagos) and the sending of greetings to many friends, with a special request that the affectionate congratulations of the Assembly should be sent to the Rev. Margaret Burr in the Khasi Hills.

As a last resolution before the lunch break, Mr. Vallance moved from the Chair, and Mr. K. M. Street of the Scottish Unitarian Association seconded a resolution of pride in the re-opening of Essex Hall. On this optimistic note the delegates and ministers went to a well-earned lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION

AFTER hearing the news from Mr. Alan Martineau that the Chancellor of the Exchequer by his Income Tax reductions the day before had deprived the Essex Hall Trustees of almost the exact amount of small surplus income allowed for in his calculations of the cost of the new Essex Hall, delegates tackled avidly the two controversial Council Resolutions on "joint-ministries" and the new "salary-scales."

Dr. Kennett urged that in view of the drop in the number of active ministers in the movement from 220 to 170 in the last 15 years, all churches, particularly those fortunate enough to be independent in hard financial fact as well as in spirit, should relieve their ministers of all but essentially ministerial work so as to set them free to look after less fortunate neighbouring churches as well. One solitary voice was heard suggesting the possibility of a joint-ministry weakening a strong church, but the delegates approved overwhelmingly of the principle of joint-ministries by passing the briefer and more forceful version of the resolution proposed by Dr. McLachlan.

Resolutions and amendments on the new "salary-scales" eventually sorted themselves out when delegates had considered separately the question of the right of the General Assembly to "compel" grant-aided churches to adopt the "Simplex" Envelope Scheme. The repeatedly frustrated efforts of the Rev. Eric Wilde to speak to his church's amendment to delete all reference to the scheme were lost in the overwhelming support for Mr. and Mrs. Wykes' amendment asking for planned annual reductions in the grants to aided churches, and the consideration by grant-aiding bodies as to whether such churches were doing all in their power to raise funds "whether by the Simplex scheme or by other means."

The Rt. Hon. Chuter Ede, in presenting the new scales, expressed his sense of shame at the complete inadequacy of them when compared with the Burnham Scale for teachers. He pointed out that there was in our movement nothing corresponding to a Town Council's rent-collector which enabled it to pay its agreed rates to teachers, and though the scales suggested were by no means good enough they were the best we could hope for at the moment, and should be regarded as a last desperate measure to relieve our ministers and their wives of the stress of economic anxiety.

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The notion of adopting "Burnham" as the *ultimate* ideal in salary scales for the Unitarian ministry was almost completely ignored by the meeting. An amendment from Dean Row Chapel to defer the operation of the scales for another year to allow time for District Associations to be consulted about the value of the Simplex scheme and joint-ministries was heavily defeated. One of the youngest ministers, the Rev. Kenneth Wright, joined one of the oldest ministers, the Rev. Nicol Cross, in his conviction of the complete hopelessness of adopting any salary-scales, in view of the present inability of so many churches to pay the ones suggested, but after the question of "compulsion" had been dealt with by the Rev. E. B. Short's brief assertion that churches that could not or would not do their part to enable a minister to receive the new scales should do without a minister, and Mrs. Fraser of Altrincham had appealed to the meeting to "let this Assembly go down in history as the one that turned the tide in our financial condition," the new salary scales were adopted with but one dissentient.

THE MINORITIES

EDITORIAL

THE Annual Meetings of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, held in Leeds last week, were exceptionally well attended. A full congregation filled the large Mill Hill Chapel; and it is always a special occasion, for those able to attend, to take part in such a unique service.

The debate on the resolutions submitted on behalf of the Council at the Business Meeting was of a high standard. The amended resolutions (printed elsewhere in this issue) came from able contributions. The resolutions now tend towards suggestions and setting a standard for the affiliated congregations rather than making precise demands; and the large majorities which each received showed that this was welcomed.

Diverse Conditions

There were indications in the debate that there was a limit at which the Assembly could persuade the whole body. The conditions of congregations and District Associations were so diverse that no resolution could include them all. This is sometimes forgotten, and the Business Meeting probably corrected a simplification in the original resolutions in this matter.

Indeed it is apparent, although this was not stressed in the debate, that conditions can change from congregation to congregation. Each has separate problems. These ought not to prevent general co-operation, for in the long run much will depend upon this. The Simplex Envelope Scheme, for instance, now overwhelmingly supported by the delegates at the Assembly Meeting, if carried out, may very well help to solve the stipend problem. This remains to be seen. But it is recognised, within the prevailing conditions, that co-operation in this matter is probably the only solution. More will be known when the Assembly meets again.

No Need for "Desperation"

It is always a temptation for those who have to direct affairs and persuade in the life of the churches—and not only in Unitarian—to sound the note of desperation. But the Unitarian congregations, as well as others, are adjusting themselves to a new situation, and this is not easy. The social life in which a religious message has to be delivered is very different—to mention only one comparison—from that of the nineteenth century. It was that century that the churches and chapels were built for Unitarians that now seem so incongruous for the congregations that are likely to gather in them. In fact it may be said now, happy administratively is the congregation not left with a nineteenth century architectural problem; and happy the congregation which has been presented by circumstances with a twentieth century building.

Retreat Not a Loss

But a retreat by a congregation from the nineteenth century need not be interpreted as a loss. The so-called "defeatism" which says "no" to impossible past conditions may be the most imaginative way of advance. If a little more of such "defeatism" had been realised during the post-war years the body might very well be in a more exciting and vigorous position now. The realistic test is: how can the past serve the present, not how can the present bolster up the past?

This involves difficulties of sentiment as well as of practical reorganisation. And these difficulties frequently impose upon small groups of devoted people decisions hard to undertake. But because the difficulties are there gives no reason whatever for desperation or a sense of defeat. Every new situation, whatever its form, is a situation of opportunity. To be able to accept it in this sense rather than in the sense of loss is to go a long way towards realising the purpose for which the churches exist.

The Return will Come

The highly stimulating Essex Hall lecture had a great deal to say relevant to this situation. Minority movements seem to be blanketed out in the modern mass society. But there is another view.

The time will surely come when intelligent and unfulfilled people will feel lost in the society that inevitably, through mass communication, tries to drum them into exact replicas of their neighbour. Mass communication is after all quite a new thing. At the moment it has some appearance of inevitability. But a

reaction is bound to take place. With relief intelligent people will look for movements outside the mass, in which they can be themselves. The new social life of the twentieth century may very well demand in a short time the minority movements. This, for religion, is on a low level. The higher level is for those who have already accepted responsibility to work in faith for the occasion when their service will be of incalculable help. There need not be the slightest note of desperation in this, rather there should be one of high adventure.

Owing to difficulties in the Printing Trade, we regret that we have not been able to make 12 pages with this issue. We hope to do so at the earliest possible opportunity.

THE PUBLIC MEETING

"Unitarians Face the Future"

IN spite of the fact that it was raining heavily, the Oxford Place Chapel Hall was full when Dr. John Kipling of the University of Hull opened the public meeting on "Unitarians Face the Future." Dr. Kipling pointed out that one of the major needs of life was to seek wisdom wherever it might be found, and the aim of that meeting was to seek the wisdom of youth, of the young people who would inherit the Unitarian Movement and guide it in the years to come.

Mr. Martin Davies, who was the first speaker, gave the audience an impression of fire and energy, allied to original thought, though he did not claim absolute originality for youth. "We young people," he began, "often kid ourselves that we think and do things for the first time." Yet he felt that older people sometimes went to the other extreme—they thought that the answers of yesterday would fit the questions of tomorrow. This feeling was weakening our movement. On the other hand, it had to be remembered that there had always been radicals and revolutionaries, classicists and romantics, optimists and pessimists.

Yet, Mr. Davies went on, there was a definite inheritance which was ours; it was not an inheritance of respectability, nor was it an inheritance of wealth. Unitarian Ministers, through the generations, had been called heretics and rebels, and many of those who would otherwise have been completely churchless had found their home with us. But the faith as it was propagated today was only a vague approximation to the old faith of earlier generations. "At the end of the nineteenth century," the speaker said, "religious liberalism faltered, and Unitarianism became almost established." Something not far removed from ancestor worship had come into being; and the result of this was that today the Movement was in some ways weaker than it had been for a century.

Facing Change

Mr. Davies pointed out that the pioneers of thought, like Theodore Parker, had often been rejected by their contemporaries. The great virtue of Unitarianism over the generations had been its ability to face change, as science faced it. Religion rarely faces such change readily today. "Unless liberal religion can offer a real alternative to the fundamentalist 'believe and ye shall be saved,' it will fail," Mr. Davies said emphatically. "But this cannot be mass produced, it cannot be derived from Billy Graham any more than from Tommy Steele."

The assured tone of Mr. Davies's speech even increased towards its end, when he declared: "We are the pioneers of the future; with faith our Church will never falter."

Miss Eileen Kielty likewise placed her trust in the way in which Unitarian Churches were developing. "Today," she said, "Unitarianism has a future. In the past even the most hopeful must have had doubts, but now we *know* we have a future in our grasp." Unitarianism, she added, could meet the fundamental problems of its day and age; it could do something to deal with the confusion, bewilderment and even terror which gripped the minds and hearts of so many people.

In these difficult days, Miss Kielty said, more and more people are searching for their responsibilities; to such people Unitarianism could be a sustaining force. Its traditions and beliefs are bound up in the struggles of individuals; it can give strength, hope, courage and spiritual confidence to many a doubting soul.

The Minister

Miss Kielty drew attention to the fact that the growth and expansion of Unitarian witness must depend to a large extent on the layfolk; yet she thought that quite ninety per cent of those church members who might be approached by friends to explain Unitarianism would refer the inquirer to their minister. "The greatest impact of our churches on outsiders," she said, "must be through the articulate faith of ordinary layfolk." She knew that it was not always easy to communicate such ideas; and it was only through youth leadership courses and similar events that it was possible for young people to learn how to pass on whatever vision had been granted to them. She felt, too, that religious education was not only for youth. Middle-aged and elderly people came into our churches—and we offered them books and pamphlets. "They ask for help and we give them literature." Miss Kielty pointed out that the number of ministers available was totally inadequate for the need of the 1960's. It was thus only by the work of eager laymen and laywomen that this lack could be overcome. She ended, as emphatically as had Mr. Davies. "Don't let our heritage of freedom be lost by disuse," Miss Kielty said. "Let us have some good healthy nonconformity. We must grasp the future firmly with both hands."

Not Administration Only

The third speaker, the Rev. A. B. Downing, began a little more diffidently, perhaps because he realised that, though young, he was older than the members of the Y.P.L. who had preceded him. He started by remarking that Unitarians always appeared to be facing the future or analysing the present. The Leeds meetings of the General Assembly, he said, had to a large extent been concerned with domestic issues—with the problems of adequate stipends for our ministers, and with the problems of manning many churches with few ministers. He hoped, while these were matters that had to be dealt with from time to time, that we should never forget that a church was, in a favourite phrase of some political thinkers, a *collective*—and, as such, it had to make room for many different people, whose energies found expression in many different ways. Our General Assembly Council, if we were to face the future with hope and confidence, would have to spend far more time in thinking out our attitude to the new puzzles and problems of the nuclear age. "If our Council does not devote some of its time to framing policy statements on these problems, we shall have to make it do so," Mr. Downing said, and added that, while administrative questions had to be faced, they were not the only questions that arose. "All sorts of problems in government and industry, they must be faced too." There might be differences between us, for Unitarianism did not mean unanimity; but there was a Unitarian way of looking at all things, social problems as well as religious problems, and that way must be made clear to the world.

"In the end," Mr. Downing added, "it depends on the faith that moves in our breasts, and on what we can do for others—what sort of witness we can give out to others." The word "faith" might sound vague, but the Unitarian faith was, for most of us, a faith in an eternal creative spirit, to which we might or might not attach the name of God.

Mr. Downing's speech ended with a statement just as strongly worded as those of his colleagues on the platform. "We still number ourselves," he said, "with those who believe that the spirit of Jesus and of men like him can make belief in God easier, not harder, to accept. But our claims can be defended and justified, and the spirit of such men can enter our own lives. That spirit has not died; it has almost visibly disappeared with many people, whose brains have gone to their

heads! The idea of God has been sicklied o'er with the pale cast of many an arrogant thought. But each individual can and should help others to believe."

"We," Mr. Downing said, "are the heralds of a great new world religion. We are taking part in an eternal experiment."

The Public Meeting at the General Assembly gatherings is usually an occasion of great fervour and enthusiasm. This year was certainly no exception. It showed quite clearly that Unitarians can still make their religion a living thing, an exciting thing, to young people as well as those of older years. And as the large audience dispersed there were many grey-headed elders who might, perhaps, have been expected to frown portentously on the enthusiasms of youth, but who, nevertheless, thought this meeting a very hopeful sign of future Unitarian advance.

THREE IMPORTANT RESOLUTIONS

(The following resolutions, amended from the resolutions submitted by the Council of the Assembly at the Annual Meeting, were adopted by a large majority.)

For the Better Use of Our Ministerial Resources:

"THAT this Annual Meeting, gravely concerned at the acute shortage of ministers and the utter inadequacy of their stipends, calls upon our Churches to recognise that ministers are servants of the whole Body and that schemes of joint and group ministries should be devised to enable the best use to be made of their services.

"It asks the District Associations to consider without delay how all congregations within their areas may receive proper ministerial oversight.

"It urges the Ministerial Fellowship to encourage its members to help with such schemes and instructs the Ministry Committee and Grant-aiding Bodies to implement the policy of grouping churches wherever possible.

"It also urges the laity to co-operate in such schemes of grouping by taking on increased responsibilities, including lay-preaching, thus freeing ministers for wider service."

Resolution on Stipends

"This Annual Meeting, etc., welcomes the Report of the Stipends Sub-Committee and adopts its recommendations as follows:—

STIPENDS

"That the following Scale of MINIMUM stipends and Increments be adopted as the General Assembly Target from January, 1960:—

	Up to 5 years in the Ministry	*Over 5 years*
1960	£440	£525
1961	£460	£550
1962	£480	£575
1963	£500	£600
1964		£625

"Thus after the transitional period a minister will at the outset of his first ministry, receive at least £500 per annum, which will rise by annual increments of £25 to £625 after five years; thereafter progressing by minimum annual increments of £15 to at least £700 per annum, which will be reached after the tenth year after entering the ministry.

"All the above-mentioned stipends shall have in addition manse (rent and rates free), one-half National Insurance contributions, contribution to M.P. & I.F., telephone rental and expense allowance.

"These figures are regarded as MINIMUM ADEQUATE STIPENDS and should not be taken as ceilings. Therefore, it is urged that before 1969, say in 1967, a further review of the position shall be made and a recommendation placed before the Annual Meeting of the Assembly."

Resolution on Grant-Aiding Bodies

"(i) That the Sustentation Fund and the Grants & Extension Committee should be merged for the purpose of making grants to stipends. It is suggested that the Grants & Extension Committee deal with all grants, care being taken to ensure that the Income of the Sustentation Fund is used only in accordance with the conditions of the Trust.

(ii) That Annual Grants to stipends shall normally be made on a diminishing scale with reductions after the first two years at a rate of at least 5% per annum. It shall, however, be open to a grant-aided church at any time to show cause why the grant should not be reduced further, or should even be increased, and the Grant-aided Body, after due consideration, shall notify the Church to what extent, and for what period (if any), it will suspend the reductions. Except when such application is made, Church accounts shall not normally be required.

(iii) That, before making any grant, the Grant-aiding Bodies shall consider whether the applicant is making every reasonable effort to raise all possible funds itself, whether by the Simplex Envelope Scheme or by other means.

"*General.* It is urged that the Assembly intensify the campaign to persuade all congregations to adopt the Simplex Envelope Scheme. In this connection congregations which are not prepared to help themselves should be informed frankly that they cannot expect to receive grants in aid of repairs and redecorations unless they do so."

"UNITY AND TRUTH"

(Under the above heading "The Yorkshire Evening Post" gave its leader to the meetings of the General Assembly, in its Saturday night issue of April 11th. The greater part of the leader is printed below.)

UNITARIANISM, which can claim affinity with the minds of great men like Milton, Locke and Newton, had a stormy history, but society today is no longer willing to beat the lips of men or sack their homes simply because they prefer the philosophical idea of unity rather than trinity. But dissent from the latter doctrine still carries a certain militant air of unorthodoxy, and this in turn begets a tough liberalism.

Speaking Fearlessly

Unitarians treat Scripture rationally and revere the Man of Nazareth as deeply as any one else. In an era when institutional religion really cannot afford to let its squabbles obscure the Message one would imagine that the Unitarians, whatever their numbers, occupy a position of strength and some hope.

They are able to speak fearlessly. The Rev. C. O. Rhodes, of the Modern Churchman's Union, did some straight thinking before the assembly about "admass," the impact of modern publicity methods. Here undoubtedly nothing can fail like "success." He instanced the calamitous failure of the Billy Graham campaign.

There is much truth in the contention of some critics (cited by Mr. Rhodes) that "by forcing upon the attention of the public an obsolete symbolism devoid of meaning for them Billy Graham had only emphasised the gulf between traditional orthodoxy and the general public." It would follow that the greater the publicity the greater the failure.

Search for Truth

What does this mean? Surely that, in the long run, the manipulation of emotional religion cannot take the place of that true devotion which is a very personal and a very quiet thing. Elijah, at a critical moment, found the way ahead in the cave at Horeb not in the whirlwind, the earthquake, or fire, but in the still small voice.

By contrast with this, one young speaker said that Unitarians today were weaker than at any time in the past hundred years. But it seems to be true that more people than ever before are making inquiries about the Unitarians. Where the formal doctrinal systems of some churches are puzzling a simpler and freer code might well have an appeal and a use. There are many mansions in religion.

In that sense the Rev. A. W. Vallance was correct in saying the present time is one of opportunity. Unitarians like Priestley are justly famed for their serenity and their fearlessness in search of truth; qualities that this distracted age sorely needs.

AT THE ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

By Joyce Hazlehurst

HAVING been asked by the Editor to send some impressions of the General Assembly meetings, I begin—naturally !—after the Sunday School A.G.M. With relief that it was safely over, I set off to find Oxley Hall, telling a friend that I would be back in three quarters of an hour. Little did I know what country walk lay before me ! I passed by the essential " back entrance " with unseeing eyes and became thoroughly lost. Although my stay in the hostel, when I at last found it, was only five minutes, by the time I returned to Priestley Hall, I had been away from my poor friend for an hour and a half. Through the happy, noisy crush of the Informal Reception I eventually found her.

There was just time for a cup of tea before attending the Peace Fellowship meeting. The large gathering there was typical of well-attended meetings throughout. Big audiences and high standards of addresses have been characteristic of this Assembly, whether in general or sectional meetings.

At the Anniversary Service both leader and preacher magnificently overcame acoustical difficulties. The preacher's earnestness, charity and depth of thought could not but impress, and it is always wonderful for the faithful few to be suddenly part of a " multitude . . . praising God."

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The return to Oxley Hall was a contrast to my earlier journey. From a lost sheep I turned into a shepherd who confidently led a large flock along a dark wet lane. " We must have private buses," decided two Women's League stalwarts. And so we had, the next two nights, thanks to their staff-work, and what a boon those buses were ! Once inside Oxley Hall, however, the comfortable surroundings, friendly staff, good food and excellent opportunities for talk, more than made up for the hostel's somewhat inaccessible position.

The pleasure of the first evening was marred, however, by the news that the Rev. John Gill had become ill with pleurisy. He considerably improved the next day, and was taken home by car.

Next morning we assembled for the Business Meeting in a Methodist building some way from Priestley Hall. Yet there was Miss Boxall again, providing home from home with her array of books. Somehow, wherever *we* were, Miss Boxall and her books managed to be also.

Mr. Chuter Ede had arrived the night before, and although his part in this year's proceedings was necessarily smaller than in 1958, he paid no flying visit, but gave us, as always, generously of his time and interest.

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A fascinating addition to the many papers we carried was a minute-by-minute timetable of the business items. We could always tell, by glancing at it, exactly how far behind schedule we had fallen. It was rather like watching a relay race. The race was all but lost at one point, but the newly-elected President put on a magnificent spurt and saved the day ! He took only ten out of the twenty minutes allotted for his Presidential Address, but he said more in those ten minutes than many of us say in thirty.

A moving occasion in the morning session was when thanks were given to Mr. Ronald Jones for his services as Honorary Treasurer for twenty years and he was elected Honorary Member of the Assembly. It was good to see him restored to health after his serious accident and to hear him comment on the Accounts as if nothing remarkable had happened to him.

After lunch we reached the two controversial Council resolutions. Many expected a fierce battle but it did not come. The Amendments seemed more concerned with the Council's English style than with its policy—although the clause about the Simplex Envelope Scheme was considerably modified. Some light relief was afforded by the spectacle of a hapless mover of an Amendment sitting on the platform waiting to speak, and three times disappointed.

The only resolution on public affairs—about government grants to Roman Catholic Schools—was " talked out " in the middle of a speech by the only man in the hall with expert knowledge, namely, Mr. Chuter Ede.

The Reception on the Wednesday evening was well-nigh perfect : a delightful and knowledgeable speech by the Lord Mayor, a lady brought up at Mill Hill Chapel ; spacious and well-appointed rooms ; good food ; and ample opportunity for talk.

On Thursday morning the Essex Hall lecture by the Rev. C. O. Rhodes was lively and thought-provoking. He had collected a vast amount of material on his subject. " He's worked hard for us," was a typical comment.

In the afternoon we were invaded by Women's League members. They much enjoyed their speaker, Mrs. Adler, on " Foreign Affairs and You." It was a pity, however, that the afternoon ended in pouring rain.

The evening meeting on " Unitarians face the future " was remarkable for the wisdom and eloquence of two young speakers, Eileen Kielty and Martin Davies. Some of us older speakers will have to look to our laurels ! During the fine address by the last speaker, the Rev. A. B. Downing, many of us felt anxiety over someone in the hall overcome by the heat. We were glad to know that he later recovered.

Friday morning saw us eager to describe the acts of social service our churches are performing. We are doing more than we had realized, and the new Social Service Department pamphlet should encourage us still further.

The Rev. J. Maries Thomas having succumbed to influenza the Rev. Dudley Richards gave the closing address in his place. I have always felt that this should not be composed miles away from the meetings and long beforehand, but on the spot. If the speaker picks up the threads of discussion and weaves into them some colours of a diviner hue, he presents us at the end with a pattern both relevant and memorable. This Mr. Richards did.

So ended Assembly Meetings which had been enjoyable and enthusiastic, and from them much of significance may spring.

THE FRIDAY CONFERENCE

CHURCHES AND SOCIAL SERVICE

EVIDENCE of the continuing high interest of Unitarians in service to the community at large was clearly displayed at the final conference session of the General Assembly annual meetings. The Assembly heard Rev. Arthur Peacock present the report of the Social Service Department, " The Churches and Social Service." This report is one of two recently compiled by the Department, explained the chairman, Rev. P. C. Whiteman. The other is a study document arising out of the resolution " A Call to Freedom " discussed at the previous year's meetings. The latter report is not yet available.

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" The Churches and Social Service " arose out of a request that the Social Service Department should examine the reasons for the gulf between the churches of the Assembly and community service in the present day said Mr. Peacock. He hoped that the report would be studied and acted upon by all sections of the movement. Young people today had little knowledge of the background to the Welfare State. Today's teenagers were tots of five or six when it came into being, yet older people were glad that the hard times of the past were no more.

" None of us would want our young people to go through what some of us went through in the late twenties' and early thirties'. But it is important that they should know of these things and realise the nature of their inheritance. In these days when religion faces the criticism and challenge of Communism it is well that our young people, to whom the secular challenge is often effectively addressed, should realise that in the nineteenth century Christian people were in the vanguard of movements for social reform. At the very time when Karl Marx was busy in the British Museum library writing his great thesis, Christian people were doing practical work to improve the conditions under which the masses lived."

This work had prepared the way, went on Mr. Peacock, for the great schemes of social betterment which followed. Thus, at the beginning of the report, there is a reference to the Domestic Missions which developed out of Unitarian inspiration. They played a great part in promoting a sense of social responsibility among people.

The speaker then turned to the present situation. "We want to stamp very firmly," he said, "on the motion prevailing in many directions that because there is a collective responsibility today for the sick, the aged, the needy, there is nothing for individuals to do."

Private Initiative

There was plenty of scope for private initiative. He then instanced some of the things which Unitarians could do.

1. There was firstly a greater need for social workers than ever before, but there was none the less a shortage of such workers. Young Christians might consider seriously the call to a vacation in this work, and ministers might take upon themselves to remind them of its value. There had been a tradition of a Social Service Sunday in our churches, but this had fallen into disuse. Mr. Peacock thought it might well be revived.

2. Further opportunities were in the field of voluntary help, but it had to be stressed that these jobs did not gain mention in the headlines. "They are simple, friendly, human jobs. Little jobs that can mean so much to people who are lonely, who are ill, who are old." The hopes of the Victorians that education would eradicate problems from our society had not been realised. There were still problems, but they were of a new type. Sick visiting met a need which medical services alone could not supply, baby-sitting could help to keep marriages healthy and maintain social contact for young mothers. The Department's report suggested other ways of personal service (visiting the old and the lonely; helping the blind, the Red Cross, the citizen's advice bureau, the blood transfusion service).

3. Next came tasks for the congregation as a whole or in part—members could be provided from the church's government for service on local authority and welfare agency committees; parties of church members could help in corporate projects. Mr. Peacock instanced the case of a recent work-camp run jointly by Young Friends and Young Unitarians where the dwellings of elderly people were redecorated. "We congratulate them on this and would say that what they are doing others can do too."

Hibbert Houses

At this point, Mr. Peacock mentioned a special need for thought to be given to the future of Hibbert Houses, the Unitarian welfare organisation for British Forces in Cyprus. Professor Stratton, the chairman of the Hibbert Houses committee had just returned from Cyprus where he found great appreciation for the work which Rev. G. J. Spurham and his assistants had done there. It might be necessary for the work to be transferred to some area of greater need at a later date, but to enable the continuance of the work to be guaranteed it was essential that some Unitarians with a strong sense of dedication to social work should offer themselves for the task. When the time came for the present staff to retire or move to a new field of service, it was hoped that others, not necessarily ministers, would be forthcoming to take their place.

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In closing, Mr. Peacock apologised that the Social Service Department's report had of necessity to be brief, but he hoped that it would point the way forward in this matter.

"We feel it is as the church reveals itself as a centre of community service as well as a centre of community worship, that its religious strength will grow and its spiritual life be quickened."

"So it is," he concluded, "that this report is presented as a call to action, a manifesto. My hope is that this document may stimulate both thinking and action so that at any time when a call for service is heard within Unitarian ranks there will be heard the response of eager people saying, 'here am I, send me.'"

Points from the Discussion

Rev. P. C. Whiteman from the chair appealed for new individual subscribers and church affiliations to the Social Service Department. The subscription is 2/6 for individuals and 5/- for churches, per year. Rev. L. Baker-Short wanted a questionnaire sending round congregations to find out what they were doing in social service, but it was replied that this had been done some years ago to little effect. A lady delegate referred to the frustration she thought ministers suffered because they were too occupied with administrative routine and so could not do the personal social service work they wished. Ministers wanting to take up professional social work involving financial gain should not be discouraged by their congregations. Mr. Lloyd Thomas welcomed this suggestion and said that in his profession it was considered wholly admirable for a man to render service outside the terms of his immediate engagement. Rev. Hilton Birtles was not clear how congregations, as distinct from individuals, could do social work. Mr. Peacock suggested a hospital visiting committee and group participation in such bodies as the friends of the mental hospitals.

Rev. Elspeth Vallance thought it valuable if the congregation itself could be a true community. There were plenty of instances where people could bear one another's burdens if they were only united and willing enough. Mrs. Sykes of Leicester, spoke of an Arthritics' Club which she had started and of its use of her church's rooms. Her Women's League branch was also interested in visiting patients in mental hospitals.

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Rev. Sydney Knight reported work done by UYPL members in distributing gifts to old people. Rev. Bruce Findlow described how members of Edinburgh congregation had done visiting for the old people's welfare agency in the city. A lady delegate brought up an interesting point about the resiting of gas meters and the testing of gas installations in old persons' accommodation as a result of representations she had made. Rev. Tom Dalton spoke of the interest of his wife and himself in Marriage Guidance work. It was time-consuming for the minister, but at Ilford they were able to lend the use of church rooms to the marriage guidance personnel. Rev. Basil Short also gave instances of the use of church premises for social service bodies. Rev. John Rowland gave examples of church members serving on local committees such as the N.S.P.C.C. Rev. Keir Murren pleaded for more interest in the opportunities provided by the Domestic Missions. They were expressing their concern for people in their neighbourhoods in new ways. There was a commendable concern for the family as a vital unit in social health. The Unitarian work in India and Hibbert Houses and Domestic Missions had one thing in common—their own spirit and the spirit which the denomination showed towards them of disinterested concern for their work irrespective of how many new Unitarians were won by it. He felt it would be useful for students to have some link with the Domestic Missions.

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Rev. E. D. Davies spoke of toys given by his congregation to the children of prisoners and of Sheffield Unity's assistance to the Family Service Units. Rev. Geoffrey Pettis was concerned that not enough mention was made in the report of refugees. The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief did excellent work in this connection, which Colne church helped. He hoped the G.A. would have a plan for assistance to refugees in the forthcoming Refugee Year. Dr. Macfachlan endorsed the appeal for refugee work and added a concern for the United Nations Association as an important contribution to social service. Other suggestions included companionship for prisoners, the Inskip League for Handicapped Persons and the provision of good clothes for needy people.

It was clear from the enthusiasm and the spate of suggestions ("like a testimony meeting," said one delegate) that a deep concern for the social witness of Unitarianism is still a real and active feature of the life of our churches.

THE CALENDAR OF THE CHURCHES

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 1959

ABERDEEN, Unitarian Church, Skene Street, 11 and 6. Rev. W. B. Tavener
ABERYSTWYTH, New Street, Meeting House, 11. Rev. J. Cuban Davies
ALTRINCHAM, Dunham Road Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Arthur W. Vallance
AINSWORTH, Unitarian Church, Knowsley Road, 1.15 and 3. Rev. B. Gill
ASTLEY, Unitarian Chapel, Manchester Road, 6.30. Mr. E. Hatton
BATH, Trim Street Chapel, Unitarian, 6.30. Mr. A. Hutchings
BELFAST, All Souls, Elmwood Avenue, 11.30 and 7. Dr. A. L. Agnew
BELFAST, First Church, Rosemary Street, 11.30 and 7. Dr. H. J. McLachlan
BERRIS GREEN (or Sevenoaks), Unitarian Church, 11. Rev. W. Waddington
BILLINGSHURST, Free Church, High Street, 11. Mr. W. Wharton
BIRKENHEAD, Unitarian Church, Borough Road, 6.30 (April 26). Rev. Maurice Johnson
BIRMINGHAM, Church of Messiah, Broad Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Gordon Stuart
BIRMINGHAM, Waverley Road Church and Hurst Street Mission, Small Heath, 6.30. Dr. D. C. Artindtall
BLACKPOOL, North Shore, Dickson Road, 10.45 and 6.30. Mr. E. A. West
BLACKPOOL, South Shore, Lytham Road, 11 and 6.30. Mr. Frank Lowe
BOLTON, Bank Street, 2.30. Sunday School, 10.30 and 6.30. Rev. E. Sidwell Price
BOLTON, Unity Church, Deane Road, 10.30 and 6.30. Rev. Arthur J. Long
BOLTON, Walmsley, 3.15, and Hallowell Road, 6.30. Rev. Kenneth Wright
BOSTON (Lincs.), Unitarian Chapel, Spain Lane, 6.30. Rev. Henry Hall
BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West Hill Road, 11. Rev. Lawrence Redfern
BRADFORD, Broadway Avenue, 3.15. Mr. Wm. Lloyd
BRADFORD, Town Hall Square, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Frank A. Billuge
BRIDGWATER, Christ Church, Dampier Street, 3. Sunday School, 6.30. Rev. Wm. Mellar
BRIGHOUSE, Unitarian Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. G. Randall Jones
BRISTOL, Christ Church, Unitarian, New Road, 11 and 6.30. Rev. John Rowland
BRISTOL, Lewin's Mead Meeting, 6.30. Rev. A. H. Bertles
BRISTOL, Oakfield Road, 11. Rev. A. H. Bertles, 6.30. Mr. R. L. Nicholson
BURNLEY, Unitarian Church, Trafalgar Street, 3. Rev. L. Hallworth
BURY, Bomb Street, 11, 2.45 and 6.30. Rev. R. L. Gowland
CAMBRIDGE, Memorial Church, Emmanuel Road, 11 and 6. Rev. H. Stewart Carter
CARDIFF, The West Grove Unitarian Church, 6.30. Rev. Rhys Jones
CHATHAM, The Church of the Great Compassion, Harwood Hall, 3. Mr. John Pickston
CHELTENHAM, Bayshill Unitarian Church, Royal Well, 11, Sunday School 11.15 and 6.30. Rev. John M. Quirk
CHESTER, Matthew Henry's Chapel, Trinity Street, 11. Mr. A. Wynne, 6.30. Rev. Ernest H. Shaw
CHESTERFIELD, Elder Yard Church, 10.45 and 6.30. Supply
CHOWBENT Chapel, Atherton, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Kenneth Twiss
COVENTRY, Great Meeting House, Holyhead Road, 11 and 6.30. Rev. E. H. Morris
CRIWE, Free Christian Church, Beech Street, 6.30. Supply
CROWBOROUGH, Unitarian Church, Hermitage Street, 11 and 6.30. Mrs. M. R. Dickin
CROYDON, Free Christian Church, Wednesday Road, 11. Rev. J. P. Chalk
DEVIZES, Wesley Street Chapel, 11. Children's Chapel, 6.30. Rev. F. Cotter
DERBY, Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, 6.30. Supply
DITCHLING, Old Meeting House, 10.45. Mr. T. Bushrod
DONCASTER, Free Christian Church, Hall Gate, 11 and 6.30. Rev. P. B. Godfrey
DOVER, Adrian Street, Unitarian Church, 11, Sunday School, 6.30. Rev. Philip C. Whitehouse
DUBLIN, Stephen's Green, West, 11.30 and 7.30. Rev. E. Savell Hicks
DUDLEY, Old Meeting House, Wolverhampton Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Norman Kirkham
DUNFERMLINE, Old Chapel, Chapel Hill, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. S. P. Whitehouse
DUNDEE, Unitarian Church, 53 Constitution Road, 11. Rev. G. D. Firth
EDINBURGH, St. Mark's Church, Castle Terrace, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Bruce Find-lay
EXETER, George's Chapel, South Street, 6.30. Rev. Dr. F. D. Meyer-Kliesel
Gee Cross, Hyde Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. J. Harry Smith
GLASGOW, St. Vincent Street, Unitarian Church, 11. Miss Ann Gowen
GLOSSOP, Primitive Street, 2. Sunday School, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. W. H. Cordell
GLOUCESTER, Barton Street, 3. Rev. J. M. Quirk
GUILDFORD, Ward Street Church, 11.15. Rev. R. Nicol Chesi
HALE CHAPEL, Hale Barns, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. G. J. Price
HALIFAX, Northgate End, 3. Rev. J. B. Tomlin
HASTINGS, Free Christian Church, South Terrace, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Dendron Skelton
HINCKLEY, Great Meeting, Baines Lane, 11 and 6. Rev. E. A. Davies
HORSHAM, Worthing Road, 11. Rev. J. Martyn Hall
HUDDERSFIELD, Fitzwilliam Street, 11. Mr. David Craven
HULL, Park Street Church (Unitarian), 6.30. Rev. Ernest Pitts
KENDAL, Market Place, Unitarian Chapel, 6.30. Rev. T. M. Wardle
KETTERING, New Meeting House, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Edgar W. Hill
KNUTSFORD, Brook Street Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Albert Smith
LANCASTER, St. Nicholas Street Church, 6.30. Supply
LEEDS, Mill Hill Chapel, City Square, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. F. M. Ryde
LEICESTER, Newarkgate Road, 11. Junior Church, 6.30. Mr. C. V. Walton
LEICESTER, The Great Meeting, East Bond Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Leonard Martin
LEWES, Westgate Chapel, 11. Rev. Basil Yeaxlee
LINCOLN, High Street, Unitarian Chapel, 6.30. Rev. H. W. Kemball
LIVERPOOL, Renshaw Chapel of Toxteth, 11 and 6.30. Dr. P. N. Tindall
LIVERPOOL, Bootle Free Church, 11. Rev. C. A. Piper
LIVERPOOL, Domestic Mission, Mill Street, 6.30. Rev. J. Kerr Murrays
LIVERPOOL, Gateacre Chapel, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Stanley R. Butler
LIVERPOOL, Hamilton Road, Everton, 3. Sunday School, 6.30. Rev. C. A. Piper
LIVERPOOL, Hope Street, 6.30. Rev. Alun Williams
LIVERPOOL, Ullet Road, 11 and 6.30. Rev. F. B. Short
LONDON, Ball Street, Edgware Road, 6. Rev. Walter M. Long
LONDON, Blackfriars Mission and Stamford Street Chapel, 6.30. Rev. W. Worthington
LONDON, Brixton, Effra Road, 11. Rev. R. G. Lee
LONDON, Essex Church, Palace Gardens Terrace, Notting Hill Gate, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Graham Short
LONDON, Forest Gate, Upton Lane, 6.30. Rev. T. E. Dalton
LONDON, Golders Green, Hoop Lane, 11, Mr. David Shelton, 6.30. Rev. K. C. Thexton
LONDON, Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham Place, 6.30. Rev. Ralph E. Gentry (also 11, 1st Sunday in the month)
LONDON, Hampstead, Rosslyn Hill, 11. Rev. Donald P. Main
LONDON, Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 11. Rev. K. C. Thexton
LONDON, Hood High Road, 11. Rev. T. E. Dalton, 6.30. Rev. R. Taylor
LONDON, Kingston, Upper Street, 6.30. Rev. A. V. Fox
LONDON, Kilburn Unitarian Christian Church, Quex Road, 11. Rev. A. V. Fox
LONDON, Lewisham Unitarian Church, High Street, 11. Rev. Robert Taylor
LONDON, Leytonstone, Lea Bridge Road, Knotts Green, 6.30. Mr. J. Nicholson
LONDON, Mansford Street Church, Bethnal Green, 6.30. Mr. D. Shelton
LONDON, Richmond Free Church, Ormond Road, 11. Rev. Walter M. Long
LONDON, Stamford, New River Lane, Unitarian Church, 11.30, Children's Church, 6.30. Rev. Arthur Pritchett
LONDON, Wandsworth Unitarian Church, East Hill, 11. Rev. Arthur Pritchett (also 6.30, 1st Sunday in the month)
LONDON, Welsh Unitarian Church at Highgate Hill Unitarian Church, 1st and 3rd Sundays, 6. Rev. T. L. Jones
LONDON, Wood Green, Unity Church, Newnham Road, 6.30. Rev. F. Hankinson
LYTHAM ST. ANNES (Ansdell), Channing Road, 11. Rev. E. W. Darlin
MACCLESFIELD, King Edward Street, 10.45 and 6.30. Supply
MAIDSTONE, Unitarian Church, Market Buildings, 6.30. Mrs. Muriel Halton
MANCHESTER, Blackley Unitarian Church, Chapel Lane, 6.30. Rev. David C. Dodd
MANCHESTER, Cross Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. John Kelly
MANCHESTER, Gorton, Brookfield Church, Hyde Road, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Maurice Bonner
MANCHESTER, Monton Church, Eccles, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. W. Hill Warhing
MANCHESTER, Pendleton Unitarian, Cross Lane, 6.30. Supply
MANCHESTER, Platt Chapel, Rusholme, 6.30. Mr. Wm. McMillan
MANCHESTER, Renshaw Street Mission, 6.30. Rev. B. L. Hopkin
MANCHESTER, Stand Chapel, Whitefield (April 26), 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Sydney H. Knight
MANCHESTER, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, 11. Mr. Philip M. Brown
MANCHESTER, Wythenshawe, Unitarian Church, Brownley Road, Benchill, 6.30. Rev. John Gill
MANSFIELD, Old Meeting House, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. Kenneth Sherratt
MARPLE, Unitarian Hall, 31, Stockport Road, 11 each Sunday
MEXBOROUGH, Free Christian Church, 6.30. Supply
MIDDLETON, Old Road Chapel, 3.15. Rev. David C. Dodd
MORETONHAMPSTEAD, 3, and NEWTON ABBOT, 6.30. Rev. C. G. Toone
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, The Church of the Divine Unity, Ellison Place, 11 and 6.30. Rev. John Gill
NEWCHURCH (Rossendale), Bethlehem Unitarian Church, 10.30 and 6. Rev. John Mather
NORTHAMPTON, Kettering Road Church, 11. Mr. G. Wilkinson
NORWICH, Octagon Chapel, Colegate, 11. Rev. J. A. Kennedy
NOTTINGHAM, High Pavement Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. C. Gordon Bolam
OLDBURY, Unitarian Church, Birmingham Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Harold A. Gore
OLDHAM, Lord Street Chapel, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. T. E. Nuttall
OXFORD, Manchester College Chapel, 11.30. Rev. H. L. Short
PADIHAM, Nazareth Unitarian Church, Knight Hill, 10.30 and 6. Rev. L. Hallworth
PARK LANE CHAPEL, near Wigan, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Gordon L. Clarke
PLYMOUTH, Unitarian Church, Notte Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. E. H. Kirkley
POOLE, Unitarian Church, Hill Street, 11. Junior Church, 6.30. Rev. J. W. Dumble
PORTSMOUTH, John Pounds Memorial Church, High Street, 11. Junior Church 6.30. Mr. J. R. Sturges
PRESTON, Unitarian Chapel, Church Street, 6.30. Rev. W. Stephenson
RINGSTEAD, Hants, The Meeting House, 11. Rev. Francis Tebby
RIVINGTON CHAPEL, nr. Horwich, Lancs, 3. Rev. R. J. Pritchard
ROCHDALE, Blackwater Street, 10.30 and 6. Rev. F. W. Bard
ROTHERHAM, Church of Our Father, 10.45 and 6.30. Rev. E. Phillips
SALE, Ashgrove Road, 11. Rev. John Gill
SCARBOROUGH, Unitarian Church, Westborough, 6.30. Rev. G. W. Parkinson
SHEFFIELD (Attercliffe), 6.30. Dr. F. T. Wood
SHEFFIELD, Fulwood Old Chapel, 11. Rev. F. Sorell
SHEFFIELD, Unity Church, Crookesmoor Road, 11 and 6.30. Rev. E. D. Davies
SHEFFIELD, Upper Chapel, 11, and 6.30. Rev. G. Stanley Whitby
SHREWSBURY, High Street, Unitarian, 11. Rev. A. H. Lewis, 6.30. Mr. E. Whitley
SIDMOUTH, Old Meeting, Unitarian, High Street, 11 and 6.30. Rev. H. Whitaker
SOUTHAMPTON, Church of the Saviour, London Road, 6.30. Rev. Herbert Chartres
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, Disenley Road, 6.30. Rev. E. G. Green
SOUTHPORT, Portland Street Church, 11 and 6.30. Rev. T. J. Jones
STOCKPORT, Unitarian Church, St. Peter's Gate, 10.30 and 6.30. Rev. J. R. Blackburn
ST. HELENS, Corporation Street, 6.30. Rev. B. Gill
STOCKTON-ON-TEES, Wellington Street, 6.30. Rev. A. D. Williams (also 11, 2nd Sunday in the month)
STOURBRIDGE, Presbyterian Unitarian Chapel, 11. Rev. C. Simpson
SWANSEA, Unitarian Church, High Street, 6.30. Rev. L. Baker Short (also 11, First Sunday in the month)
SWANSEA, Pentonard Free Christian Meeting House, 11. Rev. L. Baker Short
SWINTON, Swinton Hall Road, 10.45 and 6.30. Students
TAUNTON, Mary St. Chapel, 11. Rev. Wm. Mellar
TENTERDEN, Old Meeting House, Ashford Road, 6.30. Rev. G. Kember
TORRINGTON, Unitarian Church, 10.45 and 6. Rev. Alec L. Fenton
TORQUAY, Unity Church, Montpellier Road, 11 and 6.30. Rev. Charles Easton
TROWBRIDGE, Conigre Unitarian Church, 6. Rev. S. Spencer
WARRINGTON, Cairo Street, 10.30 and 6.30. Rev. Eric Wild
WATFORD, Friends' House, Church Road (by permission), 7.30 (Last Sunday in the month)
WALLASEY, Memorial Church, Manor Road, 11. Devotional Service, 6.30. Supply
WALSALL, Unitarian Free Church, Stafford Street, 11. Rev. R. J. Williamson, 2.30 Sunday School
WEST BROMWICH, Lodge Road, 11. Children's Church, 6.30. Rev. R. J. Williamson
WEST KIRBY, Brookfield Gardens, 11. Rev. Maurice Johnson (also 6.30, first Sunday in the month)
WESTON, Flowergate, 2.30. Rev. G. W. Pomeroy
WESTBURY, Dean Row, 10.45. Rev. A. R. Browning. Steel, 6.30. Rev. A. R. Browning.
YORK, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 6.30. Mr. C. H. Sykes

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MELBOURNE, Unitarian Church, Cathedral Place, C.2.; Unitarian Half-Hour broadcast, 4.15. Services: 4 p.m. second Sunday in each month, Evening 7 p.m. Rev. V. James
PERTH, Western Australia, Unitarian Free Christian Fellowship. Rev. R. H. Featherstone, 132 Duke Street, Scarborough, West Australia
SYDNEY, New South Wales, Unitarian Church, 15 Francis Street (off College St.). 7.15. Rev. D. W. Edmunds, Master Telephone LA 9320
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CANADA

MONTREAL, Church of the Messiah, Sherbrooke Street West and Simpson Street, 11. Rev. Antoni Cosmovici
TORONTO, First Unitarian Church, 175 St. Clair Avenue West, 11. Rev. W. P. Jordan
VANCOUVER, B.C., Unitarian Church of Vancouver, 1550 Tenth Avenue West, 11. Rev. A. P. Hewett

NEW ZEALAND

AUCKLAND, Unitarian Church, Parnell Road, 11 and 7. Mr. M. J. Wood
WELLINGTON, Service suspended—Enquiries—Mrs. Wilson, Tel. 46-372

SOUTH AFRICA

CAPE TOWN, Hout Street, 11, Sunday School: 7 Service, Rev. Winifred C. Barton

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Holidays Abroad

Unitarian holiday fellowship: *personally conducted; nothing strenuous.* Ulvik, Sognefjord, Oslo—3 centres (June 13-27); Interlaken (August 9-22); Lugano, Italian Lakes—Vintage Festival (September 20-October 3). Lone travellers welcome. Excellent hotels. Few vacancies. Write immediately: Rev. Parkinson, 10a, Westbourne Grove, Scarborough.

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Letters should be addressed to the Editor, "The Inquirer", 14 Gordon Square, London, W.C.1. They should not in general exceed three to four hundred words in length.

A Sum Done at The Assembly

Sir: During the discussion of ministerial stipends at the General Assembly meetings, I did the following sums:

1. Income tax concessions announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer: £200 million, say £4 per annum per head of population.
2. £4 per annum times 20,000 (estimated number of Unitarians in this country) equals £80,000 per annum.
3. £80,000 per annum distributed among 170 ministers gives nearly £500 per annum each.

I emphasise that these are merely three simple little sums, and not a firm line of argument. They may, however, help to emphasise some of the possibilities open to us laymen in meeting our responsibilities.

Hull. Yours, J. J. Kipling.

The Service

Sir: At Mill Hill Chapel, I was conducted through the G.A. Anniversary Service. It was rigidly traditional, almost orthodox (Unitarian if not Anglican). There were, I appreciate, many people at the service who gained satisfaction from its liturgy, inspiration from its lengthy anthem and psalm (although, as it seemed, many were not accustomed to singing psalms) and enlightenment from the sermon.

Personally I gained nothing, and I believe I was not in a minority of one.

This is in no respect a criticism of the sincerity or well-meaning of those who took part, what worries me is that I am assured by my own brief experience, and by the evidence of those whose experience goes back many years, that this form of service never varies.

It is a human tendency, when one is asked to take part on such an important occasion, to put every effort into one's performance. This is good. But is it good, in the light of our principle described above, that steps are obviously firmly taken to ensure that the performance shall fit into a scheme which delineates prayers, anthem, psalm, liturgy and sermon of great length and compass, modelled on traditional lines, in the belief that this is the only way in which the desired effect of sincere religious experience can be accomplished?

In such a service, the only break from tradition might possibly have been in the sermon.

Again, I hasten to acknowledge, there are many to whom the sermon is the central point of a service, the activity which provides meaning and significance to the whole, but surely Unitarians are the first to admit that this is not so with every individual, that worship embraces all things intellectual, emotional and spiritual.

Why is it not possible that opportunity is given for alternative forms of service to be held—as being representative of Unitarianism—which would possibly create a situation in which people may have a different experience of God than is engendered by the traditional?

I find it difficult to believe that any forward movement of thought or experience could be gained, except along the lines of a fresh admission of faith and witness and surely the majority of people present were strong enough in their faith and witness to be able to use these things as a spring board towards new and undiscovered experiences of God?

Stourbridge T. H. Jones.

CIVIC RECEPTION

For the second time in twenty-one years, Leeds imposing thirty-six year old Civic Hall provided a gracious setting for the civic reception of delegates to the General Assembly's Annual Meetings. In welcoming the delegates, the Lord Mayor, Mrs. Mary Pearce, J.P., recalled some of the Unitarian names well known in the history of Leeds, such as Robert Collier, Joseph Priestley, Charles Wicksteed and Charles Hargrove, and introduced herself as coming of Unitarian parents, and as one proud that the Civic Service in her own year of office took place in Mill Hill Chapel, with its former reputation of being a veritable "Mayors' Nest."

The new President, the Rev. A. W. Vallance, replied on behalf of the delegates, and the reception concluded with a tour of the many fine rooms in the Hall, including the Council Chamber with its prominent tablet inscribed with the name of Joseph Priestley.

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